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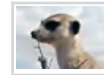
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Warming Will Lead to Major Disease Outbreaks, Experts Warn

Nicholas Bakalar
for [National Geographic News](#)
December 2, 2005

Disease outbreaks in humans are likely to increase as global climate change reshapes the world's ecosystems, a recent report suggests.

The report, "Climate Change Futures: Health, Ecological and Economic Dimensions," was jointly issued last month by Harvard Medical School's Center for Health and the Global Environment, reinsurance company Swiss Re, and the United Nations Development Program.

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The editors project significant increases in human susceptibility to various diseases and present detailed scenarios for the rapid spread of malaria, West Nile virus, and Lyme disease.

Previous studies of the future affects of warming have predicted dire consequences, such as species loss, coastal flooding, severe weather, and decreased fresh water.

This latest 140-page report offers a highly detailed examination of the impacts warming could have on human health and the associated economic consequences.

Floods and Droughts

According to the report, 3,000 African children die each day from malaria, and climate change is making the disease even more virulent.

Warming raises the biting and reproductive rates of mosquitoes and prolongs the breeding season. Warmer temperatures also shorten the time it takes for malaria parasites inside mosquitoes to reach full maturity.

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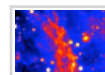
Almost **2/3** of 11-17 year olds who smoke report they got their first cigarette from a friend.*



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"Global climate change is not the same all over the globe," said Richard V. Lee, professor of medicine at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Lee was not involved in the study.

Some areas will see increased rainfall, others more droughts, he said.

"We know that the range of mosquito [species] known to carry certain infections like malaria will expand as temperatures and rainfalls vary," he added.

Increased rain usually means increased mosquito breeding sites, although floods can sometimes wash the insects' eggs away.

Continued on [Next Page >>](#)

A female mosquito feeds on a human host. A recent report says global warming will increase the range of disease-carrying mosquitoes, spawning outbreaks of malaria, West Nile virus, and other illnesses.

Photograph by James Gathany/CDC

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